12th March 1955]

Punam cultivation in Malabar.

* 1284 *Q*.—Sri K. P. GOPALAN (on behalf of Sri T. C. Narayanan Nambiar) : Will the Hon. the Minister for Revenue be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Government have received recently any representation from the Malabar Kisan Sangam and Sri T. C. Narayanan Nambiar, M.L.A., regarding the refusal of the authorities to implement the provisions of the Madras Preservation of Private Forests Act, 1949, and the Malabar Tenancy Act, 1929, to facilitate Punam cultivation in Malabar; and

(*b*) if so, the action taken thereon?

The Hon. Sri M. A. MANICKAVELU :—" (*a*) Representations were received in April 1954.

" (*b*) The attention of the hon. Member is invited to the answer given by the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture on 19th May 1954 to his short notice question No. 2667 printed as question No. 1096 in the proceedings of this House, dated 19th May 1954. On receipt of further representations in January 1955 the Collector of Malabar has again instructed his subordinates that action should be taken without any delay wherever necessary."

Sri K. MADHAVAN NAMBIAR :—" Sir, questions had been raised regarding Punam cultivation on the floor of this House on several occasions. In spite of this fact, peasants are either prevented from carrying on cultivation or harassed by way of taking proceedings against them. In these circumstances, will the Government enquire into the matter and take a final decision on this issue? "

The Hon. Sri M. A. MANICKAVELU :—" The whole matter has been enquired into. In fact, a sort of conference at the Ministerial level was held and necessary instructions had been issued to the Collector. The procedure is a little bit cumbersome in the matter of implementation of provisions under the Malabar Tenancy Act. Under the provisions of this Act, three months' notice has to be given. We have also to see whether the landlord requires the land for personal cultivation. Then only we can let lands for *punam* cultivation. The Government have issued orders that the whole procedure should be speeded up."

Sri C. H. KANARAN :—" Every year the Government are saying that they will let lands for '*punam* cultivation', in the year following. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether at least in the coming year the Government will see that facilities are provided for punam cultivation."

The Hon. Sri M. A. MANICKAVELU :—" As far as possible."

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SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" Sir, the very purpose of this provision is defeated by the owners of the estate by creating bogus documents in the names of their near relations and dependants and persons who have been cultivating regularly for a number of years are deprived of their lands and they are not given any lands. May I know how the Government propose to meet this contingency? "

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU :—" As regards people who have been cultivating lands for a number of years, say two or three years, clear instructions have been given that they must be given lands for punam cultivation. It is only in new cases that enquiry has to be made. As regards the bogus transactions, well, if a transaction is alleged to be bogus it has to be gone into."

SRI C. H. KANARAN :—" Last year, the Government wrote to Sri A. K. Gopalan and Sri T. C. Narayanan Nambiar that it was too late to think over this matter and that the Government would consider this question in the next year, i.e., this year. We represented this matter to the Collector of Malabar this year but he stated that it was too late to think of that question now. Therefore, very little progress has been made in that matter. Will the Government take steps to facilitate punam cultivation at least in the coming year? "

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU :—" May I remind the hon. Member that we are in the month of March 1955, now."

SRI S. RAMALINGAM :—" பூனம் கல்டிவேஷன் ' முறையில் விவசாயிகளுக்கு வசதி செய்து கொடுப்பதில் ஏதோ 'ப்ரொஸீஜர்' இல் கஷ்டம் இருப்பதாக மந்திரி அவர்கள் சொன்னார்கள். 'ப்ரொஸீஜர்' இல் ஏதாவது கஷ்டம் இருந்தால் அதற்குத்தகுந்தாற்போல் சட்டத்தைத் திருத்துவதற்கு சர்க்கார் யோசிப்பார்களா ? "

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU :—" The difficulty is about giving three months' notice."

SRI S. RAMALINGAM :—" Cannot the rules be so amended as to waive this question of giving notice? "

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU :—" Notice will be necessary."

Expenditure incurred on answering questions in the Assembly.

8.40 a.m. * 1285 *Q.*—SRI M. P. SUBRAMANYAM (on behalf of Sri P. Rangaswami Reddiar) : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state the average expenses incurred for answering questions during the last session of the Assembly?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" It is not possible to estimate accurately the average expenditure incurred on answering questions during the last session of the Assembly, as this is only one of the many functions of the Government machinery."